

SMALL COMPANY PURSUES NATIONAL MARKET

ABOUT FLAGSHOOTER. In 2008, Paul Carrette was watching a technician in his backyard working to locate and mark the path of a water line when he realized the need for a better product. In 2010, Bob Bishop became the first employee of Carrette's new company, FlagShooter. As marketing and sales manager, Bishop helped to develop the company's namesake product: a handheld tool that inserts marking flags into the ground and can be used to paint the surface of the ground. The Flagshooter tool is light enough to be operated with one hand, which allows a technician to hold a tracer in the other hand to locate underground lines for marking. Client companies use the FlagShooter to mark the location of their water, electricity, gas, or cable lines prior to construction, preventing construction workers from digging into the ground in locations that will damage lines and disrupt services. Based in Garretson, South Dakota, the company has grown to six employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Flagshooter started strong. Before settling on its initial model, the company developed 12 prototypes in 2010. It began taking preorders from utility companies in 2011, and sales jumped 100 percent from 2013 to 2014. When sales started to slow in 2015, company leaders reached out to South Dakota Manufacturing & Technology Solutions (MTS). The NIST MEP affiliate put Flagshooter in touch with 21st Century Marketing Systems, a company that works with MTS to help train businesses to sell products.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. CEO of 21st Century Marketing Systems Richard Johnson visited with company leaders to evaluate Flagshooter's marketing strategy. Johnson identified what the company was doing—and some things it wasn't doing—to help transition the company from product development to sales mode. For instance, he suggested that Flagshooter provide a money-back product guarantee. Johnson also provided training to company employees to re-energize sales, sharing strategies for improving Flagshooter's phone call conversation rate and developing a more consistent approach to marketing. The company saw a significant increase in sales in the first six months of 2016 compared to the first half of 2015, and company leaders appreciate the impact of the training.

"21st Century Marketing helped to get us in a more consistent direction and helped us improve our phone call conversion rate."

-Bob Bishop, Marketing & Sales Manager

RESULTS



Sales were up **60** percent six months



Marketing training for employees

CONTACT US



2329 N. Career Avenue
Suite 106
Sioux Falls, SD 57107



(605)367-5757



www.sdmanufacturing.com

